

ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY AUGUST 21



The First Masonic Heritage Day Celebration was held in Charleston on August 21, 1993.

CSO: SS.8.4

Investigate the Document: (*Ms94-18*, West Virginia Masonic Heritage Day Collection)

1. This resolution, posthumously commemorating former West Virginia Governor George W. Atkinson, states that he served as Governor of West Virginia from _____ to _____.
2. Per the resolution, Governor Atkinson was a “generous contributor to the financial needs of”? List.

Think Critically: What are Masons? What prominent Americans were members?

**MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE
OF ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE
STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA**

RESOLUTION

Whereas, M.W. George Wesley Atkinson was born in Charleston, Kanawha County, Virginia on June 29, 1845;

And Whereas, our M.W. Brother Atkinson rendered service to the people of West Virginia for many years as toll collector, internal revenue collector and agent, postmaster, newspaper editor, U.S. Marshal, federal attorney and judge;

And Whereas, our M.W. Brother Atkinson was elected as the Tenth Governor of the State of West Virginia, serving in that high office from 1897 to 1901;

And Whereas, history indicates that our M.W. Brother Atkinson was regarded with exceptional high esteem after his term as governor because of his bipartisan views and strength of character;

And Whereas, our M.W. Brother Atkinson was recognized as a statesman-like governor, scholar, lecturer and writer with deep religious convictions;

And Whereas, our M.W. Brother Atkinson was initiated an Entered Apprentice on September 17, 1866, passed to the Degree of Fellow Craft on October 1, 1866, and raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason on October 12, 1866 in Kanawha Lodge No. 20, at Charleston, West Virginia, which he served as Worshipful Master in 1873;

And Whereas, our M.W. Brother Atkinson served this Grand Lodge as its Grand Master in 1876, as its Grand Secretary from 1885 to 1905, and as Chairman of its Committee on Foreign Correspondence for thirty-four years;

And Whereas, M.W. Brother Atkinson was a generous contributor to the financial needs of numerous churches, Christian colleges, the Y.M.C.A., orphanages and other eleemosynary institutions and rendered them his personal service as a member of their governing boards;

And Whereas, M.W. Brother Atkinson's public spirit knew no bounds, with a life long habit to aid in every civic, educational, moral and religious advance with no thought of any other compensation than the welfare of the people he served;

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the memory of our M.W. Brother Atkinson be honored by the citizens and Freemasons of West Virginia as the subject of the Grand Lodge's West Virginia Masonic Heritage Day Celebration, and that on this day, M.W. Brother Atkinson be remembered by this epitaph, which he himself wrote, but which was never placed on his tombstone.

"George W. Atkinson. Born in Kanawha County, Virginia, June 29, 1845, died April 4, 1924. He tried to be honest; he would not lie, he never intentionally wronged his fellow men; he sought on all occasions to lift up his fellows; he was a friend of the poor and the helpless; he never stole a dollar or a cent; and his purpose was ever to do what he could to make the world broader and better and nobler and grander because he lived in it."

Given by my hand and the seal of the Grand Lodge, A.F.&A.M. of West Virginia, this 21st day of August, A.D. 1993, A.L. 5993.

Camden C. Ferrell
Camden C. Ferrell, P.G.M.
Attest: Grand Secretary



James E. Winzenreid
James E. Winzenreid
Grand Master